



Office of
Bill de Blasio
PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

THE PRE-K CRUNCH

How New York City Parents Struggle To Find Pre-Kindergarten Slots

There is a wide body of evidence indicating that quality early education has a broad range of positive impacts on the education of children. While this is a known fact, New York City has not expanded its early education system to ensure that all four year olds are receiving full day pre-kindergarten, a scientifically proven and quality educational model.

In the fall of 2012, Public Advocate Bill de Blasio announced a groundbreaking proposal to expand Universal Pre-K and quality after-school programs. Under the plan, all four-year olds would have access to truly Universal Pre-K, closing a gap of



nearly 50,000 children who currently receive inadequate part-time Pre-K, or no Pre-K at all.

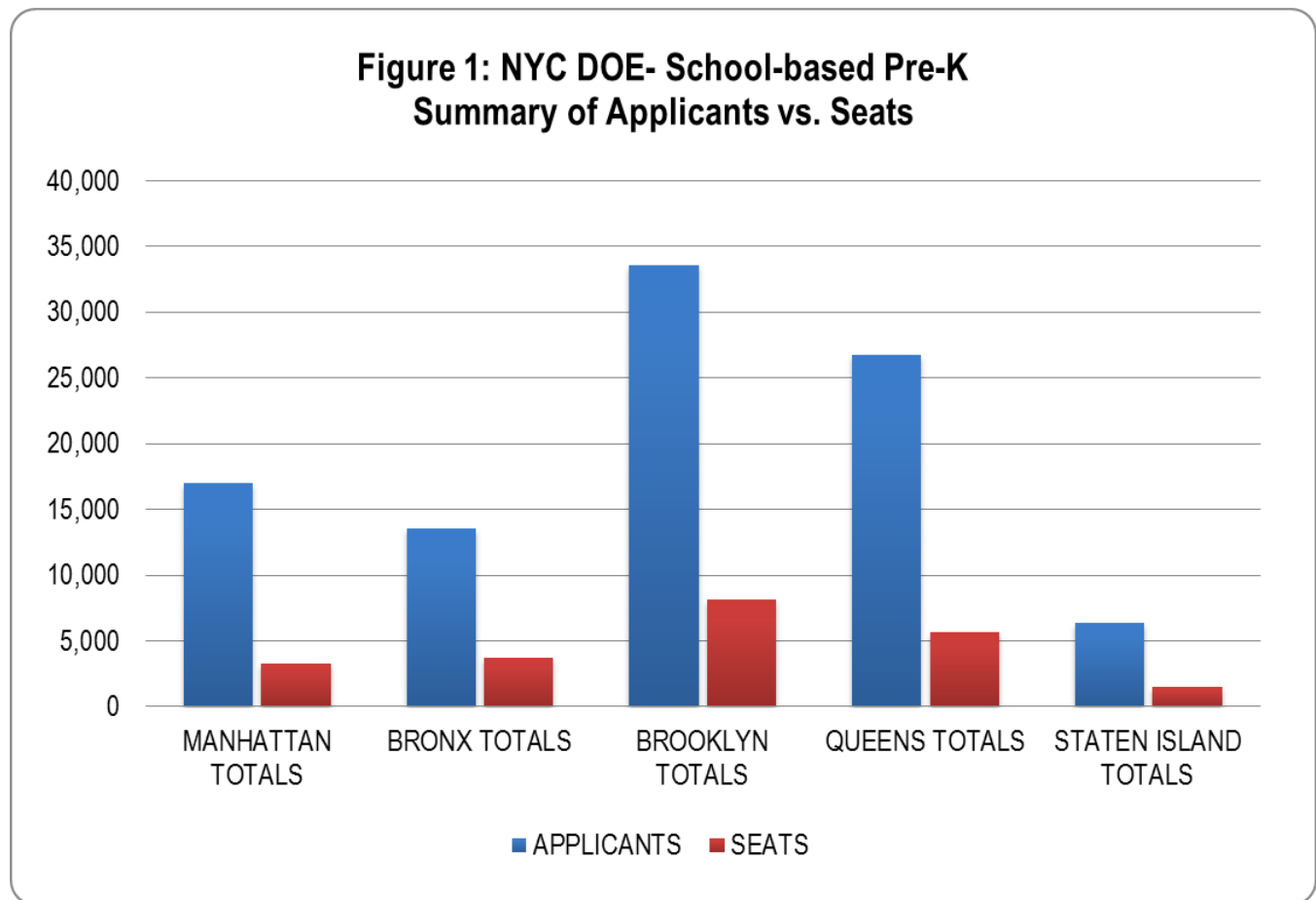
In New York City, the Pre-K system is divided amongst two City agencies, the New York City Department Education and the Administration for Children's Services, as well as divided between community based organizations and public schools. Currently, roughly 38% of Pre-K seats are available in the public schools, while nearly 62% are available in community-based settings.¹ In order to better understand the need of pre-k seats and the actual seats available, the Public Advocates Office looked at the DOE's Pre-Kindergarten Directory. While the data does not illustrate the full breadth of Pre- K seats available within a borough, it does illustrate the demand for seats in the public school setting.²

¹ Citizens' Committee for Children, Keeping Track of New York City's Children, 2013, Pre-K Capacity by Program Type, 2011-2012,

² This data does not include Pre-K seats in CBO settings.

Analysis of Supply And Demand Of Pre-K Seats In School Settings³

The figure below illustrates both the number of applicants⁴ to Pre-K by borough and the total number of public school-based Pre-K seats within each borough.



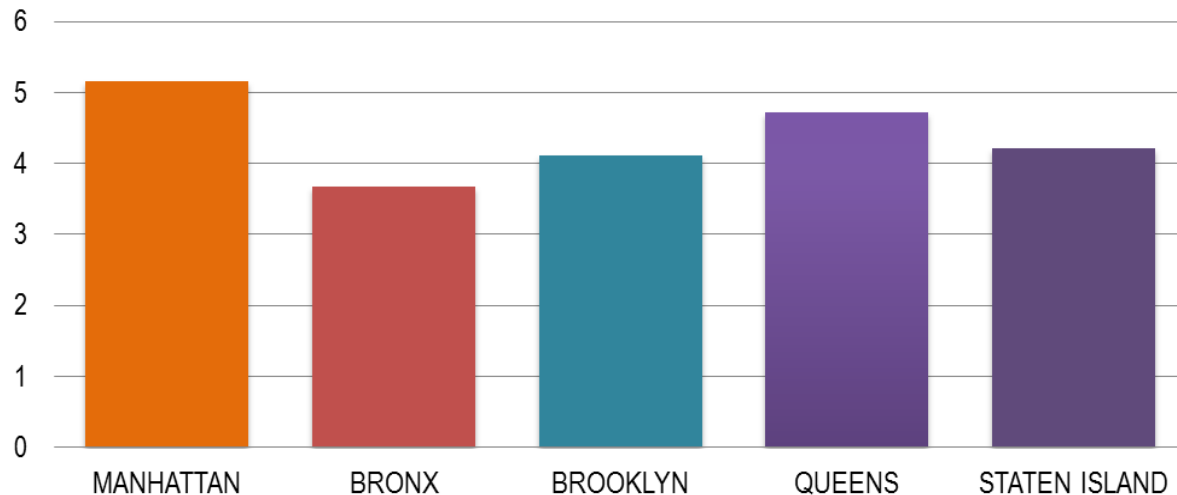
As **Figure 1** shows, there is a large discrepancy between the number of seats available to families and the number of families applying for the seats. While 33,602 families applied for Pre-K seats in Brooklyn in 2012, there were only 8,169 seats available to families in the public school setting.

While parents are able to select more than one school in the application process, as well as apply for CBO seats, it is clear that many parents are fighting for the same limited seats. In fact, as **Figure 2** illustrates, Manhattan and Queens have over 5 children applying to school based pre-k seats for every one seat available.

³ NYCDOE 2013-2014 Pre-k Directory.,
<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/DE7229B6-477D-4228-B04D-AF65C49C3442/0/2013PreKDirectory.pdf>

⁴ Applicant to the Pre-K in school based settings. - please note, interested families may apply to multiple pre-kindergarten options.

Figure 2: Average applicants per seat



In many school districts there are over 7 applicants per seat, as seen in **Figures 3 and 4**.

Figure 3: Applicants per seat - Citywide

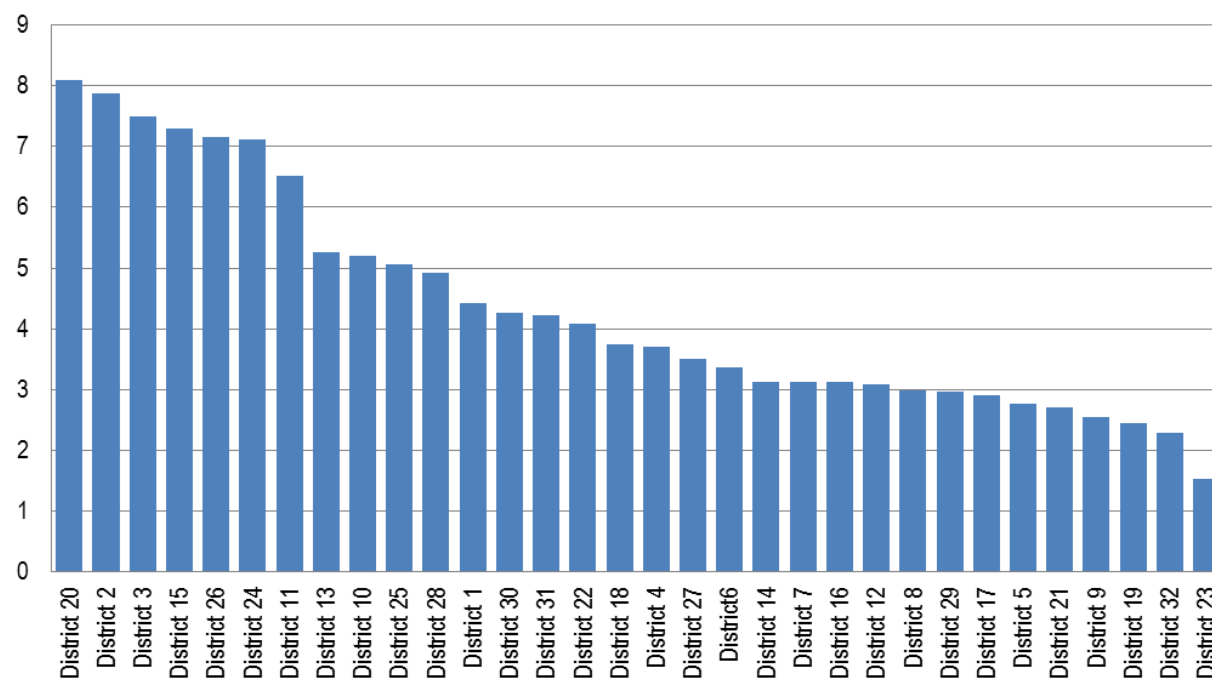
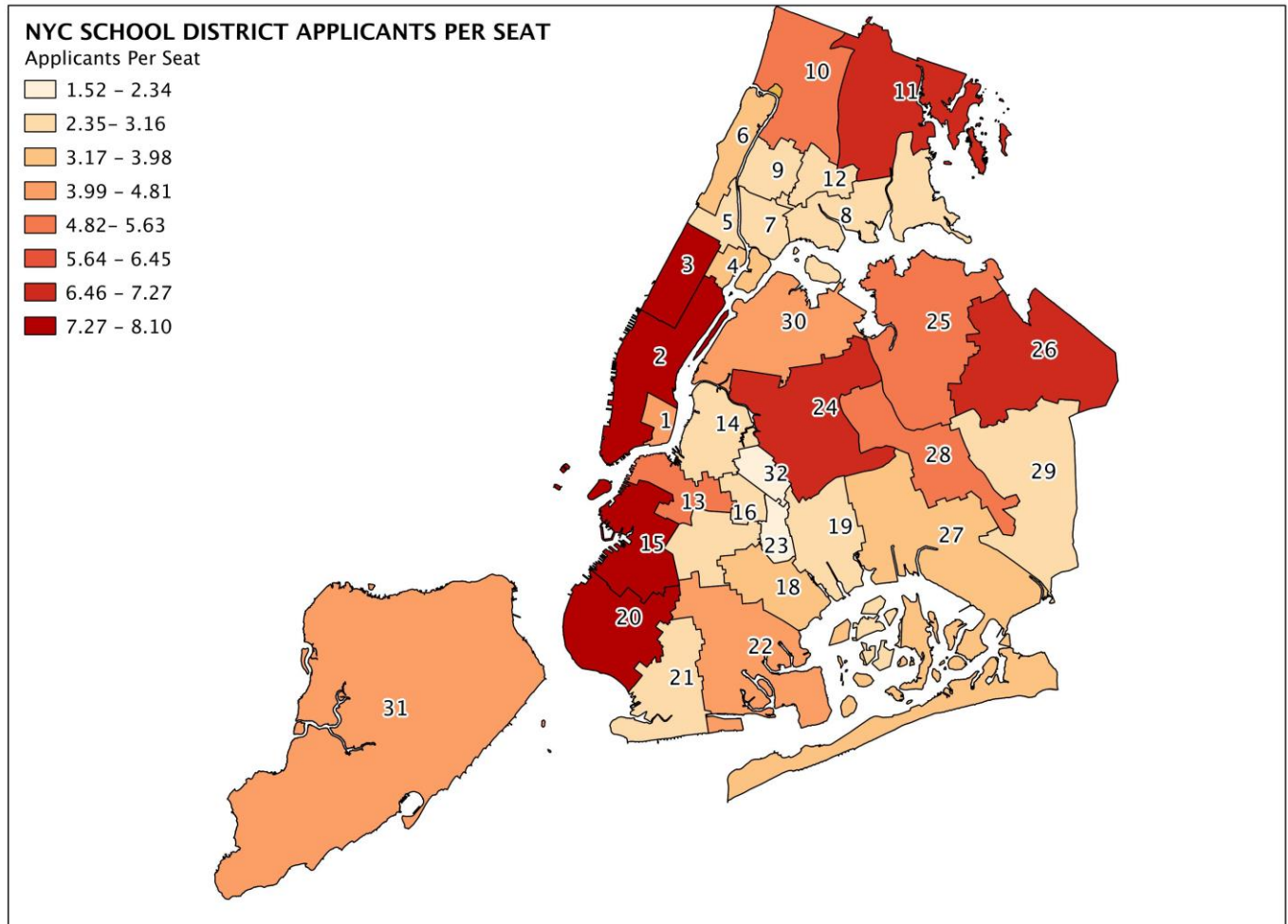
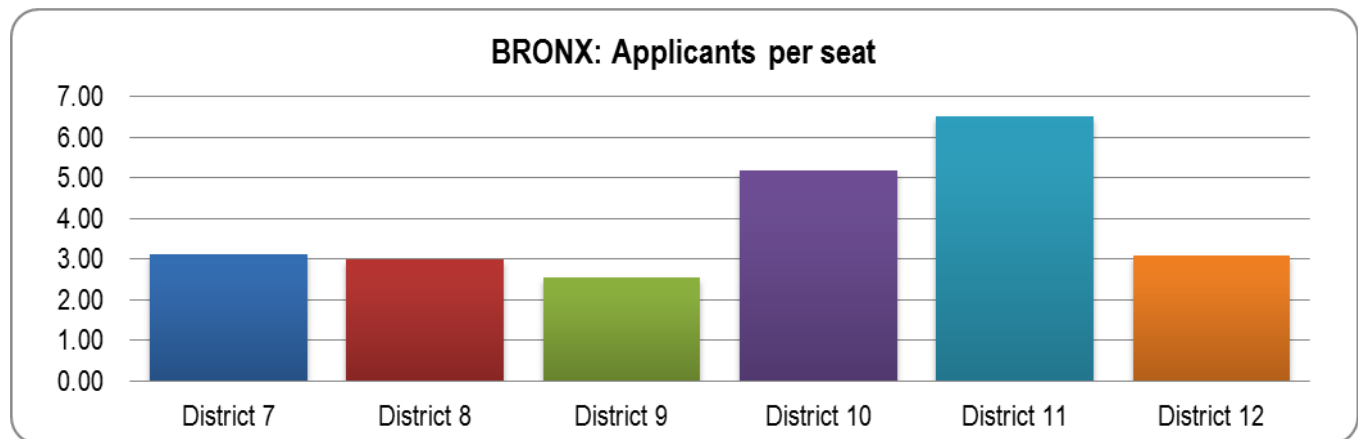


Figure 4: Applications per seat by district



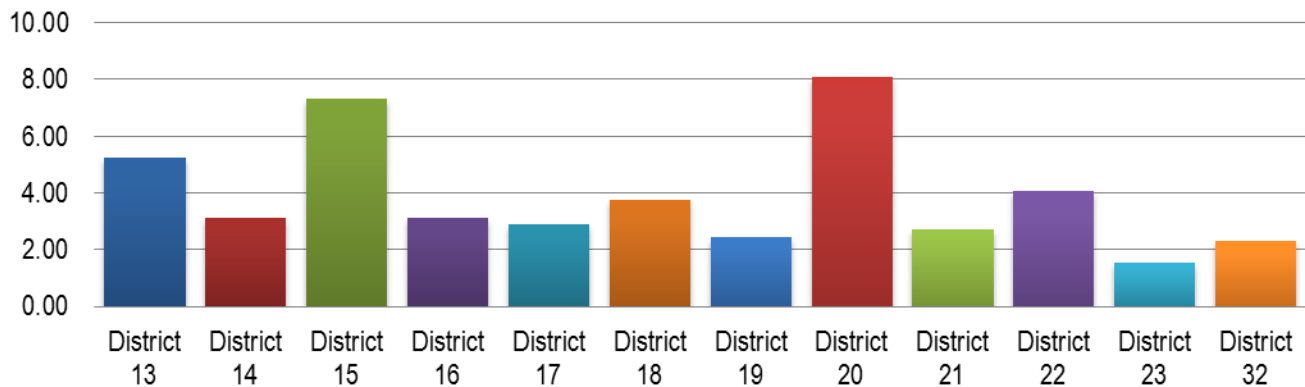
Borough Level Comparison

The graphs below illustrate applicants per seat by borough⁵ and district.

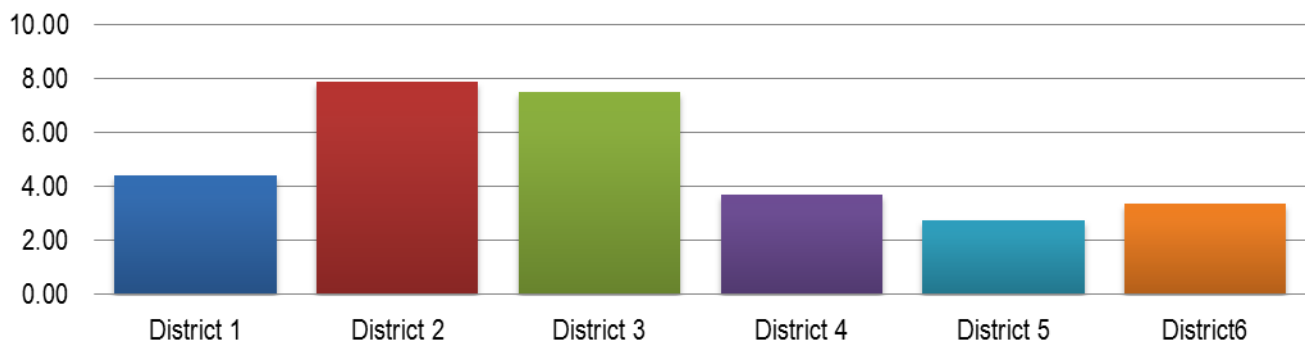


⁵ Staten Island only has one community school district, 31 and can be seen in the Citywide graph.

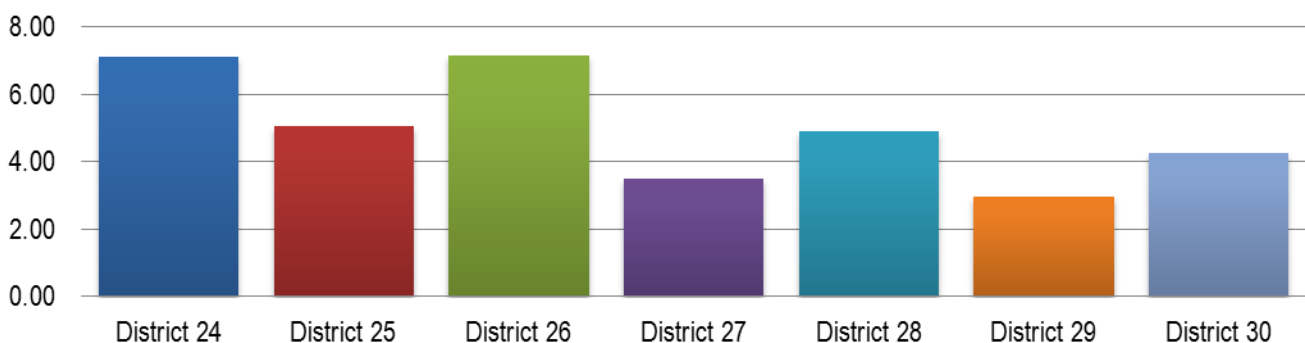
BROOKLYN: Applicants per seat



MANHATTAN: Applicants per seat



QUEENS: Applicants per seat



What We Need

It is clear that the City is unprepared to meet the demand for universal Pre-K in our school settings. We must immediately expand our system. To fund this transformation, Public Advocate de Blasio is calling for an increase in NYC income tax on earners over \$500,000 from 3.86% to 4.3%. The increase would yield \$532 million in new revenue.